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Henry Minton, *Departing from Deviance: A History of Homosexual Rights and Emancipatory Science in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002. 344 pp., \$65.00 hbk, ISBN 0-226-53043--4 \$20.00 pbk, ISBN 0-226-53044-2.

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At the same time, there appears to be no discernible differences between the two groups in the quality of their intimate adult relationships or in self reports of anxiety or depression.

Tasker and Golombok do, however, identify some important and intriguing differences between these two groups of young adults. They report, for example, that children of lesbian mothers form significantly better relationships with their mothers' intimate partner(s) than do children of heterosexual mothers. Certain to be their most controversial finding, they report that, 'Daughters of lesbian mothers were significantly more likely than daughters of heterosexual mothers to consider [the possibility of] same-gender sexual attraction or have a lesbian relationship.' But, while significantly more daughters of lesbian mothers reported considering and having same-sex sexual relationships than did daughters of heterosexual mothers, they were no more likely than their peers to identify as lesbian or bisexual. Two factors strongly correlated with these findings were a mother's openness regarding physical intimacy and her involvement in feminist politics (suspected by the authors to indicate a willingness to talk openly about sexuality). Indeed, the authors report that, 'young people from lesbian mother families generally felt more able to discuss their own sexual development with their mother or her partner than did children brought up by single heterosexual mothers', regardless of whether that sexual development was in the direction of heterosexuality or homosexuality. The authors conclude that while young adults raised in lesbian-headed families are no more likely than those raised in heterosexual-headed families to identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual, they nonetheless appear 'less bound by conservative norms restricting women's premarital sexual activity.'

Overall, this book is well crafted to extend our knowledge of the effects of a mother's sexual orientation on her children's development through adolescence and into adulthood. None of the findings reported in this book are particularly surprising, at least to those of us who subscribe to a social constructionist perspective regarding sexual development. Still, a few of Tasker and Golombok's findings, particularly those suggesting that daughters raised by lesbian mothers are more open to sexual exploration than are daughters raised by heterosexual mothers are certain to be controversial in many lesbian and gay legal and political circles. This book is a must read for anyone wishing to engage in these discussions.

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Readers of these pages will almost surely know of the important research on human sexuality done by Alfred Kinsey and Evelyn Hooker and the impact that each of their works has had on the lesbian and gay rights movement in the United States

and beyond. It is much less likely that such readers know about the work of Jan Gay, Thomas Painter and Alfred Gross, each of whom was involved in early social scientific research about homosexuality. Drawing on extensive unpublished materials, the most interesting parts of *Departing from Deviance* describe the life histories and professional/intellectual activities of these early researchers.

Minton's historical survey of the lives and work of these little-known gay and lesbian surveyors of homosexuality is part of his broader project concerning 'emancipatory science' applied to human homosexuality, namely the attempt 'to use scientific knowledge . . . to emancipate homosexual men and women from the tyranny of moral ostracism, legal punishment and medical treatment' (p. 3). According to Minton, 'gay people have historically recognized that science can be a powerful site for combating oppression and effecting social justice' (p. 264). It would be hard to dispute that the work of Hooker and Kinsey – as well as the declassification of homosexuality as a mental disorder by American Psychiatric Association (APA) in 1972 – advanced the cause of lesbian and gay rights in America. In contrast, a truly contentious claim would be that continued scientific and social scientific research on homosexuality will have (or is likely to have) a positive effect on the social, legal and political struggle for lesbian and gay rights. Although Minton's historical discussion of the work of Gay, Painter and Gross might be brought to bear on this contentious claim, Minton fails to address whether his historical analysis is relevant to the emancipatory potential of, for example, current surveys of sexual behavior, like that reported by Edward Laumann and his collaborators in *The Social Organization of Sexuality* (University of Chicago Press, 1994), the genetic or neurological studies like those conducted in the last decade or so by Dean Hamer, Simon LeVay, Richard Pillard and Michael Bailey, or various scientific studies of sexual behaviors of non-human species. Instead, Minton seems to accept, without argument and with little engagement of the novel historical evidence that he presents, that all research on human homosexuality has great liberatory potential.

Although *Departing from Deviance* provides a gripping and dramatic look at the lives of two gay men and one lesbian who were absorbed in social science research on homosexuality, even its discussion of these three interesting individuals has problems. Minton's discussion is sometimes repetitive and he too often speaks in the voice of his historical subject, rarely stepping back to offer a critical analysis of their assumptions, projects, and ambitions. Further, when he is discussing Kinsey, Hooker and the APA, Minton does not make a significant contribution beyond previous historical scholarship. In fact, there is surprisingly little comparing and contrasting of Kinsey and Hooker, on the one hand, and Gay, Painter and Gross, on the other. Such a comparative analysis might provide some insight into the emancipatory potential of scientific research on homosexuality today, but Minton fails to offer much of use in this regard.

Despite the limitations of *Departing from Deviance*, those interested in the history of social science and scientific research on homosexuality or those interested in the lives of lesbians and gay men in the early and middle parts of the 20th century will find dramatic and significant new material in Minton's new book.

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